

LISTING OF CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace any/all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for processing graphic information present on mailpieces, whereby the graphic information is acquired, evaluated and stored, and whereby the acquired graphic information is used for physically sorting mailpieces, the method comprising:
 - evaluating the graphic information to obtain a first result,
 - augmenting a database with additional sorting features based on the first result,
 - storing surface video data contained in the graphic information and/or storing a statistical evaluation,
 - ascertaining a second result of the evaluation,
 - sorting a first mailpiece on the basis of the second result,
 - triggering a physical sorting of a second mailpiece based on the graphical information of the first mailpiece,
 - and physically sorting the first mailpiece based on a reference code.
2. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, comprising
 - determining if postage indicia are present on the mailpieces.

3. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein evaluating the graphic information takes place via a data line at a different point in time and/or at a different place than the point in time and/or the place of the physical sorting of the first mailpiece based on the reference code.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein evaluating the graphic information comprises statistically evaluating the graphic information.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, comprising
verifying the authenticity of sender franking by comparing the graphic information present on the mailpieces to the graphic information expected for a particular mailpiece, whereby expected graphic information corresponds to a determination that preceded the comparison, and registering a postage indicium as being forged if the graphic information present differs from the expected graphic information.

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, comprising

verifying the authenticity of a digital postage indicium by deciphering the encoded digital information contained in the graphic information and comparing the encoded digital information to unencrypted graphic information present on the appertaining mailpiece to determine whether the encoded digital information matches the unencrypted graphic information and, if the encoded digital information does not match the unencrypted graphic information, registering the postage indicium as being forged.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 6, comprising

generating a first hash value from data contained in the graphic information in order to check whether the first hash value matches a second hash value contained in the encoded information and, if the first hash value does not match the second hash value, registering the postage indicium as being forged.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, comprising

forming the first hash value taking into account information about mailpiece data, taking into account a temporarily stored random number and taking into account a loading procedure identification number.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, comprising
evaluating the graphic information according to one or more sorting features.
10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein
a time of day of a sorting event is a sorting feature.
11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein
a date of a sorting event is a sorting feature.
12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein
a starting time and/or an ending time of a sorting event is a sorting feature.
13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein
a specification of production machines in a mail or freight distribution center is
a sorting feature.
14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein
a value of the insufficient postage determined by means of the evaluation is a
sorting feature.
15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, wherein
a Sender Franking Machine (SFM) identification determined by means of the
evaluation is a sorting feature.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein the SFM identification being readable is a sorting feature.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, comprising
checking whether the determined SFM identification is present in a negative file.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, comprising
checking whether the determined SFM identification is present in a positive file.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, comprising
checking whether the SFM has insufficient postage.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, comprising
checking whether SFM currency is readable.

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, comprising
checking whether SFM postage indicium is readable.

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, comprising
checking a date of a Personal Computer Franking ("PCF date") as a sorting feature.

23. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, comprising
checking whether a Personal Computer Franking version ("PCF version") is present as a sorting feature.

24. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, comprising
checking whether Personal Computer Franking insufficient postage ("PCF insufficient postage") is present as a sorting feature.

25. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 9, comprising
checking whether a determined Personal Computer Franking is present in a negative file ("PCF in negative file") as a sorting feature.

26. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, comprising
storing data from automated checking of the postage.

27. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, comprising
storing results of the evaluation of graphic information in a database.

28. (Previously Presented) A device for processing graphic information present on the surfaces of mailpieces comprising:

an image processing unit, whereby the image processing unit has a device for acquiring, evaluating and storing the graphic information, and has at least one device for recognizing different types of postage of the mailpieces, whereby the image processing unit as well as the device for recognizing the types of postage are in a data network,

wherein the data network is connected to at least one device for performing a physical sorting of mailpieces, at least one device for generating a reference code, and at least one device for evaluating the graphic information, so that the at least one device for evaluating the graphic information of a first mailpiece ascertains a first result of the evaluation, whereby the data network is also connected to a database that is augmented by a sorting feature on the basis of the first result of the evaluation of the graphic information, for determining a second result of the evaluation, and at least one device for performing the physical sorting of a second mailpiece is activated, whereby a second physical sorting of the first mailpiece is carried out on the basis of a reference code.

29. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 28, wherein the at least one device for evaluating the graphic information of the mailpieces is located inside and/or outside of a mail distribution center.

30. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 28, wherein the at least one device for evaluating the graphic information of the mailpieces has at least one input device and at least one display device so that evaluation results and surface video data of the mailpieces are displayed to a user and edited by the user employing the input device.

31. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 30, wherein the at least one display device comprises analog and/or digital video equipment.

32. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 30, comprising
PC-based display devices that allow a filtering of the video data and a detailed depiction of specific segments of the video data.

33. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 30, wherein the at least one input device is selected from the group consisting of PC keyboards, numerical keypads, barcode scanners and a device for speech recognition.